

ASTRID ODETE ESCOBEDO BARRONDO

Legal Official for more than 10 years

1. Legal advisor to the Coordination of the Special Prosecutor against Impunity, where I oversaw the planning and execution projects. The implementation of investigatory tools and administration of the Prosecutor's office.
2. Legal Advisor to the Commissioner's office, where I held the role as an advisor developing rulings regarding projects in the justice sector, legal opinions regarding the viability of laws and legal opinions in general.
3. As the lawyer assigned to the Investigations unit and assistant to the head of Investigations, I executed activities related to providing legal advisories, producing legal opinions, legal and administrative reports, receiving complaints, and the administration of cases.
4. On investigatory and legal activities in charge of the cases: Murder of Victor Rivera, Bus of Nicaragua, Byron Vargas, Faraón, Cabezas, attacks on Penitentiary System, Laundering and Policy, TCQ, Steel of Guatemala, IGSS PISA, Bottles, Influential Traffickers, BANTRAB/Villas de Elgin, Financing of illicit electoral UNE, prejudgement against presidential candidate Sandra Torres, Prejudgement of the First Vice President of Congress, Felipe Alejos, cases that involved an ex-president, ex vice president of Guatemala, ex magistrates of the Supreme Court, elected representatives, businessmen and members of organized crime.

Reprisals

From March 2017 there was an attempt to criminalize me, the Public Ministry opened a case against me for money laundering, which should be dismissed with the sixth court proceeding. After suspending the hearing more than 4 times, since February 2020 it has not been rescheduled.

With an open case, I run the risk that there will be an arrest warrant issued for me even though the case has no foundation and I cannot point to any public charge. This is the reasoning behind why I am in the process of obtaining asylum in the United States.

Though I have applied for different positions in Guatemala, having in mind my academic formation and experience, I am not considered. In ACNUR, they responded that my profile would be for an international post.

On Possible Ideological Interference

In CICIG, there did not exist any ideological interference, in the period of Iván Velásquez we were divided by the following areas of investigation:

1. Tax Evasion
2. Administrative Corruption
3. Judicial Corruption
4. Drug Trafficking
5. Dispossessing of Lands
6. Electoral Financing

Along these lines, research on the cases was developed, and it was during these activities that different political figures, judicial operators and economically powerful people were personalized, the cases were not assigned such that anyone could investigate any particular person. The work was distinctly technical, the work groups were solely focused on the search for truth and justice.